The issue of the missing Indian POWs was also raised in the official level discussions held on March 5-6, 1999. The Pakistani side stated that there were no Indian POWs in its custody, but agreed to re-examine the matters afresh.

There are on going discussions through diplomatic channels with Pakistan for the early release of detainees in each other's custody.

Negotiation between Indian Editor and Pakistan's Former Foreign Secretary

930. SHRI KULDIP NAYYAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the backdoor negotiations between India and Pakistan through Editor, Mr. R.K. Mishra and Pakistan former Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik had official blessings of both countries;

(b) whether any formula has been discussed there; and

(c) if so, what were the contents?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) It is normal for countries to have a variety of processes of communication, both official and non-official. From the Pakistan side, Mr. Niaz Naik was sent to India in June, 1999. He was told categorically that Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in Kargil would have to be vacated. The same message was then conveyed to the Pakistan side by Shri R.K. Mishra, who visited Islamabad in the same month. There was no divergence in what was communicated to Pakistan officially or through non-official channels.

Indian detainees in the Myanmar jail

931. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian detainees in the Myanmar jail with their names and ages o'conviction;

(b) whether Government have taken up consultation with the Myanmar Government; and

(c) whether there is any plan of any proposal under